Seated near the front of the church, with "very few people ... seated between myself and the Minister," he feels himself "an object of attention" and loses "complete control" of himself. Yet again, the reader might suspect that just as when Metcalfe mistakes significant for insignificant symptoms, possibly from confounding effects with causes, he "mistakes" a subjective for an objective event. The discrepancy between Metcalfe's wrestling with angels and remaining seated before the entire congregation, suggests that little or nothing outwardly happened:

> How I managed to last out the sermon, I can never tell. My eyes I know had a wild maniacal look. I could keep them on no object for a quarter of a minute at a time. I tried hiding my eyes but it was of no use my feature also were beyond control.

That the whole invisible scene transpires within the church, and during a sermon, suggests that Metcalfe is really describing the turmoil of a guilty soul. He naturally feels himself observed because he is in church, and naturally feels there is something to observe, because he feels guilty. That guilt is probably not symtpom but cause in his case is consistent with the immediate aftermath below, and with some of the other details he presents.

Metcalfe asserts that he was similarly affected ever after, but nevertheless finds it "singular" that his sister could not look him "straight in the face." While such inability is commonly associated with shame and guilt, one's inability to look someone in the face could easily be misconstrued as that other's, and moreover such inability could be due to shame or guilt. Perhaps it is no coincidence that Metcalfe has chosen as a pivotal event in his narrative of his case, an episode both highly symbolic and fraught with meeting and capable of deflecting that meaning away from himself. Similarly, that his sister "seemed agitated in my presence," could obviously be attributed as much to his own agitation as to hers over what he suspected her of having done. What might have been a symptom or a reflection of his own disorder, of his own guilt, becomes instead his first real clue as to the guilt of his sister.

Metcalfe describes how, after his first attack, his "nervousness and self-consciousness" discouraged him from going about in public. At the general store where he worked he began to serve only younger customers, avoiding adults from fear of being "noticed." For a year after the family moved from Newcastle to Toronto, he was unable to work at all.